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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes statistics showing university faculty circulation of books for one fiscal year, and makes comparisons by department, academic rank, degree, sex, and students' rank--graduate or undergraduate. Findings indicate that 57.8% of the faculty had checked out one or more books. The departments with the highest use were Foreign Language, Political Science, English, and Philosophy and Religion. Overall, the Humanities and Social Sciences Departments surpassed the Sciences and Applied fields. Assistant Professors led the other ranks, men exceeded women, doctorates surpassed non-doctorates, and graduate faculty were ahead of non-graduate faculty. An analysis for the same period of faculty use of the interlibrary loan service exhibits essentially the same differences. Distance of the faculty members' offices from the library had no apparent relationship to use of the circulating book collection. Examination of findings provided no explanation for these differences. (Author/MBR)

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FACULTY USE OF A UNIVERSITY LIBRARY CIRCULATING BOOK COLLECTION

by

Donald S. MacVean

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FACULTY USE OF A UNIVERSITY LIBRARY CIRCULATING BOOK COLLECTION

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June, 1978

ABSTRACT

Analysis of the library book circulation by a university faculty of 805 persons for a fiscal year showed that 466 or 57.8 percent had checked out one or more books for a total of 11,814, an average of 15.9 books per person for the total group. The first four departments in the amount of use were Foreign Languages, Political Science, English, and Philosophy and Religion, respectively, and overall the Humanities and Social Sciences Departments surpassed the Sciences and Applied fields considerably. The Assistant Professors led the other ranks decisively, men exceeded women, doctorates surpassed non-doctorates, and graduate faculty were ahead of non-graduate faculty. Essentially the same differences existed when users of interlibrary loan and the Illinois State Universities Inter-Library Borrowers' Card were compared. Distance of the faculty members' offices from the library had no apparent relationship to use of the circulating book collection. No explanation for these differences is available.

FACULTY USE OF A UNIVERSITY LIBRARY CIRCULATING BOOK COLLECTION

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ONE OF THE JUSTIFICATIONS for maintaining a university library is that faculty members need it for their instruction and research. In response to this need, universities typically spend five percent or more of the annual operating budget in support of this agency. Yet very little is known, at least in published form, to what extent faculty members use the library's resources. Knowing how many and which faculty members do use them can be useful in evaluating instruction, identifying parts of the book collection which need strengthening, and determining the need for the improvement or expansion of other library services.

Purposes of the Study

1. To analyze the statistics showing faculty circulation of books for a fiscal year, 1974-75 in this case, and make comparisons by departments, academic ranks, doctoral degree holders vs. non-doctoral degree holders, sex, and graduate faculty vs. non-graduate faculty.

2. To analyze for the same period the faculty use of the Interlibrary Loan Service and the Illinois State Universities' Borrowers' Card and compare it to the use of the local collection.

Definitions

1. Use -- means circulation or "check out" or execution of a "charge" card which would have permitted removal from the library building, whether actually removed or not.

2. Circulating Book Collection -- that part of the library's total collection which may be checked out for home use. Excluded were the general reference collection, periodicals, the United States and Illinois government publications, legal reference

titles, the volumes in the Archives and Special Collections Department, the advanced titles on physics and chemistry located in the Physical Sciences Building, the Elementary and High School Library collections, and the volumes in the Curriculum Laboratory. Microforms were also excluded. The exclusions total 162,073 volumes and 198,663 microforms, leaving 288,441 volumes upon which the study was based.

3. Faculty -- persons holding rank of Professor down through Lecturer. Includes only those administrators who hold academic rank, including department chairmen. Excluded are administrators without rank, faculty assistants, graduate assistants, executive assistants, adjunct professors, emeriti, faculty on sabbatical or disability leave, those assigned off-campus fulltime, and civil service employees. Official university records were consulted to verify each person's status.

Method

To circulate (or "check out" or "charge out") a book at Western Illinois University Library, the patron fills out a McBee Keysort card for each volume. These cards are sorted between faculty and students and counted on a daily basis. For each faculty member there is a card on which the call number for each book charged out is recorded, also on a daily basis. At the end of each fiscal year, a summary showing the total charges or check outs for each faculty member is prepared and included in the Circulation Department's annual report to the Director of Libraries. Thus, the basic data for this study was that report for the fiscal year 1974-75.

The use or circulation of books by the 805 persons included in the study, when divided by departments to which assigned, academic rank, level of degree held (doctorate or non-doctorate), sex, and graduate faculty or non-graduate faculty status, is shown in Tables 1 - 5, respectively. Each table shows for each group the number of users, the total number of books charged

out by the group, the range, average, and the rank (based on the average) for each group.

At the end of the year (1974-75) the library book collection totaled 450,514 volumes and 198,663 microforms. Since this is only a medium sized collection for a university faculty of 805 and an enrollment of about 14,000, it is logical to expect that faculty members would need books not available locally. The library provides two services which can be drawn upon to procure such books. The first is the traditional interlibrary loan under which books can be borrowed from most libraries in the United States and some abroad when done in accord with the American Library Association's Interlibrary Loan Code. Records for all such loans made or requested by faculty members during 1974-75 were available and the analysis on the basis of departments, academic rank, level of degree held, sex, and graduate or non-graduate faculty status is shown in Table 6. The second expansion of local service results from a policy formulated in 1972 by the Directors of the Illinois State Universities libraries. Under this policy faculty members of the Illinois State Universities are granted borrowing privileges at all of the libraries when they appear in person and have the proper identification in the form of a card issued by their home library. The record of all cards issued to faculty members at Western Illinois University was available and the analysis is shown in Table 7.

In the belief that distance from the library might relate to use, Table 8 was constructed. Here faculty members are grouped

according to the building in which their offices are located and the distance of each building from the library is shown.

Discussion

As is so often the case in statistical studies, the cold facts are clearly presented but they offer no explanations. Such is the case here. The differences in circulation between departments are shown in Table 1. The range is extreme, extending all the way from absolute zero for the College of Education Advisement Center to an average of fifty-eight per person in the Department of Foreign Languages. It should be explained that the former is not a teaching department, but rather a group of persons who assist students in making course selections. Probably the books available on such matters are small in number, but the whole literature on curriculum should be somewhat relevant. It should not be assumed on the basis of this example, however, that all of the non-teaching departments were at the bottom of the list. Administration, Educational Field Experiences, Head Resident Advisors, and the University Library are all non-teaching departments in the sense that they do not meet regularly scheduled classes, but all ranked higher than ten of the teaching departments, and the University Library ranked sixth in the list of forty-six. It is clear, therefore, that classroom teaching alone is not an important determinant of library use. Nor, it appears, is the level of teaching when departments are compared. The Foreign Languages Department ranked first, yet it had no graduate program. Twenty-six departments

Table 1.--Circulation of Books by Faculty Members Arranged by Teaching Department or Other Group

Department	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Accountancy	15	4	26.6	50	0-21	3	36
Administration	63	31	49.2	462	0-68	7	25
Afro-American Studies	3	3	100	81	1-73	27	5
Agriculture	15	8	53.3	88	0-33	6	26
Art	27	15	55.5	398	0-103	11	18
Biological Science	27	16	59.2	345	0-96	13	14
Business Education	8	3	37.5	50	0-43	6	26
Chemistry	14	8	57.1	70	0-30	5	28
College of Ed.- Advisement Center	5	0	0	0	----	0	46
Communication A & S	24	21	87.5	385	0-53	16	11
Counselor Education	11	8	72.7	60	0-20	5	28
Economics	13	9	69.2	174	0-50	13	14
Ed. Administration	7	2	28.5	20	0-17	3	36
Ed. Field Experiences	4	2	50	21	0-18	5	28
Ed. Foundations	25	8	32	82	0-42	3	36
Ed. Services (Univ. School)	9	3	33.3	47	0-37	4	32
Elementary Ed.	16	3	18.7	51	0-44	3	36
English & Journalism	62	56	90.3	2254	0-223	36	3
Foreign Languages	23	19	82.6	1345	0-558	58	1
Geography	19	12	63.1	439	0-256	23	8
Geology	7	7	100	72	0-27	10	20
Head Resident Advisors	14	7	50	57	0-39	4	32
Health Sciences	16	3	18.7	7	0-3	.43	45
History	29	23	79.3	707	0-115	24	7
Home Economics	17	6	35.2	60	0-18	4	32
Ind. Ed. & Tech.	14	4	28.5	40	0-31	3	36
Law Enforcement	9	3	33.3	25	0-10	3	36
Learning Resources	14	10	71.4	193	0-44	14	13
Management	19	10	52.6	144	0-50	8	22
Marketing & Finance	11	8	72.7	124	0-50	11	18
Mathematics	32	20	62.5	286	0-53	9	21
Military Science	5	2	40	19	0-17	4	32
Music	33	19	57.5	275	0-59	8	22
Philosophy & Religion	8	7	87.5	273	0-166	34	4

Table 1.-- Continued

Department	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Physical Ed. - Men	23	3	13	16	0-8	.69	43
Physical Ed. - Women	24	4	16.6	16	0-6	.66	44
Physics	13	9	69.2	304	0-97	23	8
Political Science	23	14	60.8	1184	0-564	51	2
Psychology	23	18	78.2	294	0-56	13	14
Quantitative & Inf. Sci.	5	3	60	61	0-48	12	17
Reading	6	2	33.3	33	0-29	5	28
Recreation & Park Administration	10	5	50	97	0-51	8	22
Sociology & Anthropology	20	16	80	403	0-102	20	10
Special Education	9	3	33.3	16	0-13	2	42
Theatre	9	7	77.7	128	0-48	15	12
University Library	22	22	100	558	3-67	25	6
Totals	805	466	57.8	11,814	0-564	14.7	--

Table 2.--Circulation of Books by Faculty Members Divided by Academic Rank

	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Professor	176	84	47.7	1571	0-149	8.9	5
Associate Professor	192	114	59.3	2470	0-123	12.8	2
Assistant Professor	312	195	62.5	6428	0-564	20.6	1
Instructor	112	69	61.6	1205	0-73	10.7	3
Lecturer	13	4	30.7	140	0-69	10.7	3
Totals	805	466	57.8	11,814	0-564	14.7	--

Table 3.—Circulation of Books by Doctoral Degree and Non-Doctoral Degree Holders

	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Doctoral Degree Holders	467	386	61	7100	0-564	15.2	1
Non-Doctoral Degree Holders	338	180	53	4714	0-558	13.9	2
Totals	805	466	57.8	11,814	0-564	14.7	--

Table 4.--Circulation of Books by Faculty Members Divided by Sex

	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Men	634	370	58.1	9838	0-564	15.5	1
Women	171	96	56.1	1976	0-233	11.5	2
Totals	805	466	57.8	11,814	0-564	14.7	--

Table 5.—Circulation of Books by Graduate and Non-Graduate Faculty Members

	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Graduate	332	256	77.1	5099	0-564	15.3	1
Non-Graduate	473	210	44.3	6715	0-558	14.2	2
Totals	805	466	57.8	11,814	0-564	14.7	—

Table 6.—Faculty Members Who Received and/or Requested Books Through Inter-library Loan Service

Department	Number	Percent	Number of Books	Rank
Accountancy	1	7	1	22
Agriculture	1	7	1	22
Art	1	4	3	16
Biological Sciences	5	18	6	14
Chemistry	1	7	8	12
Communication Arts & Sciences	4	17	9	11
Counselor Education	1	9	1	22
Economics	1	8	1	22
Educational Administration	1	14	1	22
Educational Foundations	1	4	2	17
English	5	8	26	4
Foreign Languages	7	30	106	1
Geography	4	21	13	8
Geology	1	14	7	13
History	13	45	61	2
Learning Resources	1	7	11	9
Management	2	11	2	17
Marketing & Finance	1	9	2	17
Mathematics	2	6	20	5
Music	2	6	2	16
Philosophy and Religion	1	13	2	17
Political Science	6	26	31	3

Table 6.--Continued

Department	Number	Percent	Number of Books	Rank
Psychology	4	17	4	15
Recreation & Park Administration	2	2	2	17
Sociology and Anthropology	4	2	16	6
Theatre	1	11	14	7
University Library	6	27	10	10
Totals	79	10	362	—

Academic Rank	Number	Percent	Number of Books	Rank
Professor	10	5.7	47	3
Associate Professor	16	8.3	66	2
Assistant Professor	45	14.4	238	1
Instructor	7	6.3	10	4
Lecturer	1	7.7	1	5
Totals	79	9.8	362	—

Sex	Number	Percent	Number of Books	Rank
Men	66	10.4	326	1
Women	13	7.6	36	2
Totals	79	9.8	362	—

Degree Level	Number	Percent	Number of Books	Rank
Doctoral Degree Holders	55	11.7	237	1
Non-Doctoral Degree Holders	24	7.1	125	2
Totals	79	9.8	362	—

Table 6.--Continued

Graduate or Non-Graduate Faculty Status	Number	Percent	Number of Books	Rank
Graduate Faculty	37	11.1	166	2
Non-Graduate Faculty	42	8.9	196	1
Totals	79	9.8	362	--

Table 7.--Faculty Members Who Used Illinois State Universities' Borrower's Card

Department	Number	Percent	Rank
Accountancy	1	6.6	5
Administration	1	1.6	5
Agriculture	1	6.6	5
Art	1	3.7	5
Biological Sciences	1	3.7	5
Communication Arts & Sciences	3	12.5	3
English	4	6.5	2
Foreign Languages	7	30.4	1
History	2	6.9	4
Mathematics	1	3.1	5
Music	1	3	5
Physical Education - Men	1	4.3	5
Political Science	2	8.7	4
Sociology & Anthropology	1	5	5
Totals	27	3.4	--

Table 7.--Continued

Rank	Number	Percent	Rank
Professor	5	2.8	2
Associate Professor	4	2.1	3
Assistant Professor	18	5.8	1
Instructor	0	0	4
Lecturer	0	0	4
Totals	27	3.4	—

Sex	Number	Percent	Rank
Men	22	3.5	1
Women	5	2.9	2
Totals	27	3.4	—

Degree Level	Number	Percent	Rank
Doctoral Degree Holders	19	4.1	1
Non-Doctoral Degree Holders	8	2.4	2
Totals	27	3.4	—

Graduate or Non-Graduate Faculty Status	Number	Percent	Rank
Graduate Faculty	9	2.7	2
Non-Graduate Faculty	18	3.8	1
Totals	27	3.4	—

Table 8.—Circulation of Books by Faculty Members Arranged by Distance of Their Offices from the Central Library

Building	Distance (in feet)	Persons	Users	Percent	Books	Range	Average	Rank
Memorial Library	0	28	25	89	634	0-67	21.6	6
Sallee Hall	225	48	39	81	1715	0-558	36.5	2
Simpkins Hall	350	67	58	86	2273	0-223	35.5	3
Tillman Hill	350	27	20	74	553	0-256	20.4	7
Brown Hall	400	45	29	64	377	0-49	8.4	13
Seal Hall	400	2	2	100	14	0-13	7	15
Knoblauch Hall	500	48	20	46.6	205	0-33	4.2	18
University Union	500	5	2	40	25	0-20	5	17
Beu Health Center	600	4	0	0	0	——	——	23
Special Services	650	5	2	40	95	0-68	19	8
Corbin Hall	675	1	1	100	7	——	7	14
Annex	750	4	4	100	113	1-53	22.6	5
Sherman Hall	800	41	27	65.8	317	0-60	7.7	14
Garwood Hall	850	19	8	42	284	0-103	13.4	12
Olson Hall	950	1	1	100	39	——	39	1
Stipes Hall	1300	136	57	41.9	769	0-50	5.6	16
Washington Hall	1600	1	0	0	0	——	0	23
Horrabin Hall	1700	57	19	34.5	283	0-44	14.8	10
Morgan Hall	1700	116	82	70.6	2878	0-564	24.3	4
Lincoln Hall	1725	1	0	0	0	——	0	23
Western Hall	2200	36	8	22	113	0-51	3.6	19
Waggoner Hall	2300	50	34	68	639	0-96	13.9	11
Tanner Hall	2700	2	1	50	3	0-3	1.5	21
Brophy Hall	2750	24	4	16.6	16	0-6	.66	22
Wetzel Hall	2800	2	1	50	3	0-3	1.5	21
Currens Hall	3000	30	20	66.6	455	0-97	15.1	9
Bayliss Hall	3000	1	1	100	3	——	3	20
Higgins Hall	3100	1	0	0	0	——	0	23
Thompson Hall	3100	2	0	0	0	——	0	23
Henninger Hall	3200	1	1	100	1	——	1	22
Totals		805	466	57.8	11,814	0-564	14.7	—

offer a Master's degree or Sixth Year certificate, but sixteen of the twenty six fell in the lower half of the list.

From examining Table 1, it is clear that the Departments classed as Humanities or Social Sciences were generally high on the list and the laboratory or applied departments farther down. This confirms what has been assumed for many years, i.e., that the library is the laboratory for the Humanities and Social Sciences and that the Sciences and applied subjects are less dependent upon it.

It is impossible to explain, however, the low rankings of the departments in the School of Education, of the Health Sciences, and of the Departments of Physical Education. The available literature of these subjects is extensive, all departments have large enrollments, and all have graduate programs, but faculty use of books was very low.

It appears there is no direct relationship between the number of volumes on a particular subject and their circulation by the logical users of such books. Although the exact number of books available on the various subjects or disciplines is not known, a rather rough survey of the book stacks revealed that the volumes on foreign languages and literatures constituted one of the smaller parts of the total collection, yet the Foreign Languages Department faculty had the highest average circulation. The books on Education were one of the largest parts, but the average use per faculty member in the various departments of Education was well toward the bottom of the list. The collections in English and History are comparatively large and the average

faculty circulation figures for these departments ranked third and seventh, respectively. Thus, the unevenness in use between departments is quite unrelated to the number of books available on the different subjects. These differences in use cannot be explained by saying that the books available were not those needed or desired by the faculty in any of the departments. During the eight year period ending in 1975, the library had spent $1,799,484 on books and each department had been awarded a share on an annual basis arrived at by a formula based on factors common to all departments. All faculty members had the opportunity to participate in book selection. This is not to say that each department or each faculty member could order all books desired. There never was enough money to permit this, but collection growth was balanced and equitable.

The differences in circulation between ranks are shown in Table 2. The Assistant Professors led both in percentage of users and in the average number of books per person, in the latter case by a wide margin. Why this is so is not known. It might be conjectured that some of these persons are still working on their doctorates and, therefore, have a special need for library books. The same is true, however, of the Instructors and their average use is only slightly more than half that of the Assistant Professors. It might be argued that many of the Professors, who ranked lowest, are in administrative rather than teaching assignments and have less need for books. But, as shown in Table 1, the administrators ranked twenty-fifth in average circulation per person, not far below the median and so such an assumption

is not supported. Also, as shown in Table 3, non-doctorates do use the book collection slightly less than the doctorates.

When the sexes are compared (see Table 4), the men have only a slight advantage in the percentage of users (58.1 to 56.1) but a distinct one (15.5 to 11.4) in average use per person. The graduate faculty members exceed the non-graduate faculty (see Table 5) in percentage of users by a wide margin (77.1 to 44.3) but in average use per person only 15 to 14, which is quite insignificant. Again no explanation can be offered for these variations.

Related research on this subject is meagre. In a study done at the University of Chicago Library, El-Sheniti (1:16) found that fifty-two percent of the faculty had circulated one or more books, with an average of 23.6 items per faculty member. In the present study, as shown in Table 1, 57.8 percent of the faculty charged out books during a fiscal year for an average of 14.7. The El-Sheniti study may not be entirely applicable to this one, however. The items circulated were not limited to books and may have included periodicals, although it is not made clear just what "printed items" did include. If the figures include periodicals and pamphlets they would not be comparable to the ones used in this study. Also, it is not clear for what period of time the charges had accumulated. If it varied from a year, the data again would not be comparable.

A study of faculty book circulation by Broadus (2:324) in 1962 relates to this one in that it reports the percentage of the total faculty who circulated one or more books, the

average circulation per faculty member, and the differences between both academic ranks and the teaching departments. In his study 55.4 percent of the faculty circulated one or more books compared to 57.8 percent in the present study. The average circulation for all faculty was 6.6 volumes compared to twelve. When the ranks were compared, Associate Professors were first, Assistant Professors second, Instructors third, Professors fourth, and Lecturers were excluded or not reported. This order varies from what is reported in Table 2 in that Assistant and Associate Professors are reversed. The list of departments varied considerably, both in number and designation, from those in this study, but when only those which had an average circulation of ten or more books per person are considered the rank order is: Physics, Library Science, English, Political Science, History, Foreign Languages, Biological Sciences, and Library Staff. When this list is compared to that found in Table 1 of the present study, it is seen that the same departments rank in the top eight, except for Physics and Library Science (Learning Resources) but not in the same order.

In a third and final study, that by Waber and Saracevic (3:247), which relates to this one in only one respect, it was found that 43 percent of a university faculty checked out one or more books.

Thus, in the four studies, including this one, which deal with faculty circulation, the only fact reported in all was the percentage of the faculty who circulated one or more books. It varied from 57.8 percent in the present one down to forty-three

percent. Apparently, then, it is unrealistic to expect more than about fifty percent of a university faculty to use the library book collection. It may be suggested that the non-users patronize other libraries in the community or region. It was with this possibility in mind that the data on interlibrary loan transactions (see Table 6) and the signatories for the State Universities Borrower's Card (see Table 7) were organized and included in the present study. When these tables are compared with Tables 1 - 5, a close correlation is found. The Foreign Languages Department led all departments in all instances, doctoral degree holders exceeded non-doctorates, and men were above women. The only variation occurred when the graduate and non-graduate faculties were compared. The former led in use of the local collection but the latter was on top in interlibrary loans and signing out the State Universities Borrower's Cards. But it is possible to be even more exact on this point because a record of names was available in all cases--for local charges, interlibrary loans, and State Universities Borrower's Cards--and it was found that of the seventy-nine persons who used the Interlibrary Loan Service only five had not used the local collection; of the twenty-seven who used the State Universities Borrower's Card, only one had not used it. It is clear, then, that the latter two services are used as supplements to and not substitutes for the local library services. It is possible that some of the persons who did not use books used other forms of print such as periodicals, pamphlets, and government publications. No records are available to either confirm or refute this but

any such assumption is somewhat questionable because no one form is a substitute for the other and the genuine researcher would not limit his or her sources in such a way. And, as shown in a study by Meier (4:223), books receive more use (forty-four percent) than any other part of a university library's collection. It seems safe to conclude, therefore, that the non-users of the book collection were largely non-users of the entire library as well.

In an important study, The Public Library Inquiry (5:43), it was found that proximity or convenient access related directly to library use. To determine if this factor had any affect in an academic setting, the distance of each faculty member's office from the library was calculated and the data is shown in Table 8. All 805 faculty members were housed in the thirty buildings. In some cases an entire department was in the same building, but this was not always true and some buildings housed two or more departments and parts of others. Thus, the data in Table 8 cannot be related to that in Table 1 showing circulation statistics for the various departments. In this instance, however, it is clear there is no direct relationship between the distance of a faculty member's office from the library and his or her use of the library book collection.

Conclusions

The fact that 339 or forty-two percent of the faculty were non-users of the library book collection and probably of the entire library as well is ample evidence that the library

is a grossly underutilized facility. It also suggests that these persons are not in close touch with the literature of their disciplines, at least not the recent literature, except perhaps in a very casual way through their own book purchases and subscriptions. This should be a matter of concern to librarians, first of all, who should study their organizational and service policies to see if they are inhibiting faculty use of the collections. Academic administrators should also be concerned about this situation because it gives rise to doubt about the quality of teaching on the campus.

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